



US Army Corps of Engineers



Addressing Environmental Compliance Requirements During Emergencies: Lessons Learned

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Overall Objectives for Response Actions

- Reduce further risk to life and property
- Accelerate recovery of the affected area
- Ensure environmental stewardship an integral consideration in the response
- Avoid emergency response to one problem/need creating a more significant problem



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Prepare Before the Event

- Keep project compliance documentation up to date
- Write a plan (brief and flexible), share it, periodically review and update it
- Define “core” environmental team for emergency response
- Define general communication/decision-making framework for EC efforts
- Where possible, navigation project DMMP should address site-specific considerations for emergencies



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Response After the Event

- Review existing EC documentation and compare to scope of emergency response actions
- Assess compliance “gaps”
- Determine required compliance actions in coordination with resource agencies
- Document all coordination, decisions, and commitments
- Work closely with Regulatory staff to strive for consistency of process whenever possible



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Guiding Principles for Compliance Activities

- Compliance with laws is not waived in emergencies
- Fully involve resource agencies immediately
- Be inclusive in all response–related deliberations
- Make the process transparent
- Use every means of communication possible to expedite compliance efforts
- Bring closure “up front” to as many compliance actions as possible without delaying emergency response



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Things to Keep in Mind

- Expect surprises and new information (be adaptable)
- Response team members may be personally affected by the disaster, impacting their availability and effectiveness
- Advance planning and standard processes make response activities easier when you call in help from elsewhere
- Build trust and credibility with environmental interests during disaster response and recovery



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Questions ?

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